

Examiner's Amendment

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Thomas J. Appledorn on 10/12/2011.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 16 and 17 are cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as applicant claim:

An assembly of a vehicle including at least two panels, the assembly comprising: a structural outer roof panel of a vehicle having a non-flat, contoured, passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface; a passenger compartment interior trim panel disposed adjacent the structural outer roof panel of the vehicle and having an outboard surface defining a non-flat topography that matches the non-flat, contoured, passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface of the structural outer roof panel, the passenger compartment interior trim panel comprising: a core layer having inboard and outboard surfaces; a heat formable metalized film layer bonded to the outboard surface of the core layer and defining a non-flat topography that matches the non-flat,

contoured, passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface of the structural outer roof panel, the heat formable metalized film layer positioned completely against the passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface of the structural outer roof panel without an air gap between the structural outer roof panel and the passenger compartment interior trim panel; and a decorative layer disposed on the inboard surface of the core layer and exposed to the passenger compartment.

Additionally applicant claims:

A vehicle roof construction comprising: an outer structural panel having an outer surface and a passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface, wherein the outer structural panel forms a non-flat vehicle roof; and an interior trim panel having a vehicle-roof-facing outboard surface and an inner surface, the interior trim panel forming a headliner adjacently-attached to the passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface without an air gap there between, the headliner comprising: a thermoformed film layer facing and attached to the passenger-compartment-facing inboard surface of the vehicle roof; a core layer heat bonded to the film layer, the core layer including a first material having heat absorbing or insulating properties a second material having heat-reflecting properties, each of the first material and the second material including a polymer material, wherein the second material that forms the film layer is coated with a metallic material to define a metalized film layer; and a decorative layer disposed on an inboard surface of the core layer and forming the inner surface of the interior trim panel.

2. In the previous office action dated 07/07/2011 claims 9-14, 18-19, 22-23, 25-26 and 28-29 were indicated as allowable. Applicant has cancelled the remaining claims.

A search of the prior art did not show the claimed invention. The closest prior art as exemplified by Ogawa (2004/0124668) teaches a vehicle panel structure which includes an outer panel, an inner panel facing the outer panel, and a trim of a cabin interior (headliner). At least one surface of a back surface of the outer panel functions as a heat insulation and heat dissipation section to insulate heat for the surface (abstract).

Ogawa's structure shows an outer panel and an inner panel, but not a core layer. Ogawa discloses a structure where the insulating layer is the inner panel which is not in contact with the roof.

Tusim (WO99/61283) teaches a headliner composed of a core layer and one or more adjacent layers.

It would have been obvious at the time of the invention to have modified the multilayer construction of Ogawa by adding a core layer, but Ogawa and Tusim make no suggestions or nor provides any guidance to make it obvious to reverse the order of attachment of the insulating layer to render said layer in contact with the vehicle roof.

Von Bercheim (US 3,583,754) teaches a roof structure on a passenger compartment which is a multilayered construction comprising a metal foil and a synthetic plastic. Von Bercheim further teaches that the metal foil constitutes a ceiling electrode. In addition, a metalized coating being composed of an organic film and metallic particles is not equivalent to a metal foil which functions as a ceiling electrode.

Von Bercheim makes no suggestions or nor provides any guidance to make it obvious to replace the ceiling electrode with a metalized coating.

3. Claims 9-14, 18-19, 22-23, 25-26 and 28-29 allowed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to GREGORY CLARK whose telephone number is (571)270-7087. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:00 AM to 5 PM Alternating Fri 7:30 AM to 4 PM and Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jennifer Chriss can be reached on (571) 272-7783. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jennifer A Chriss/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1786

GREGORY CLARK /GDC/
Examiner
Art Unit 1786